

Winter can be hard on cars and challenging for drivers. Is your vehicle ready for cold temperatures and difficult driving conditions?

Whether you're planning a weekend trip to the mountains or a road trip to visit relatives, winterizing your car is crucial to keeping you and your family safe and your vehicle running well. By taking a few simple precautions, you can reduce the chance of an accident or a breakdown.

Don't get caught in the cold!

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
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Drive Smart California

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Get Winterized!

TIPS TO PREPARE FOR
WINTER DRIVING



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California's Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) offers the following checklist of pre-trip inspections. While some of these tasks can be done easily, others may require the help of a qualified service professional. To find out tips on how to select a repair shop, visit the BAR Web site at www.autorepair.ca.gov.

Check your owner's manual and make sure your vehicle is up to date on its recommended maintenance schedule.



If you're driving in the mountains or foothills, carry **tire chains** and learn how to install them, if possible.

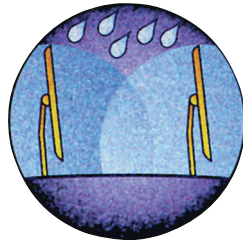
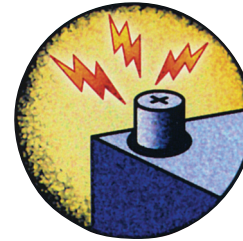
Pack a **winter safety kit** in an old duffel bag or backpack and keep it in the trunk of your car. Items should include:

- Battery jumper cables
- Large flashlight and extra batteries
- Basic first aid supplies
- Extra blanket and warm clothing
- Battery-powered radio with spare batteries
- Tool kit (screwdriver, pliers, adjustable wrench)
- Bottled water and non-perishable food
- Highway safety flares in good condition
- Windshield ice scraper



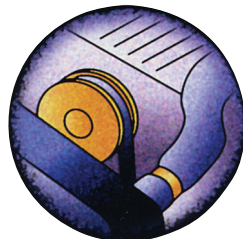
Check the antifreeze/coolant level in your car's **cooling system**. A quality repair shop has a tool that can check your car's antifreeze/coolant to make sure it will provide adequate freeze protection.

Check your car's **battery**, especially if it's near the end of its warranty. Check the battery cables, which can affect the battery's performance. Make sure the battery cable connections are tight and corrosion-free.



Change the **wiper blades** if worn or cracked and refill the wiper fluid. Do **not** replace wiper fluid with water.

Check your car's **interior and exterior lights**, including turn signals and brake lights.

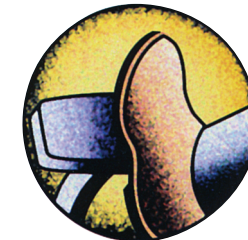
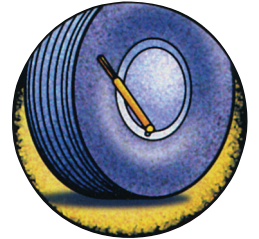


Inspect the **hoses and belts** for cracks, soft spots, or bulges. If you find a problem, have the hose or belt replaced.



Have an automotive technician check the **heater/defroster** system.

Check **tires** for excessive wear, including the spare. Regularly check the air pressure in all tires, including the spare.



Have the brakes checked by a licensed adjuster. Visit the BAR Web site to find a licensed brake station in your area.

If you carry a **cell phone** for emergencies, make sure it's fully charged.



By taking these simple precautions, your car should be ready for everything this winter—from a long drive in the mountains to a short trip to the grocery store.

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